

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 13, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 13, 2005, at 9:45 a.m.: That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3669.

Appointments:
Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group

Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAH,
Clerk of the House.

FOCUSING ON THE CHILDREN

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I know we will not forget, but I believe that as we make our way through confronting and addressing the pain of those who survived Hurricane Katrina, we should know all of the facts. Coming from Houston, let me say that one of the glaring tragedies that we will face are the large numbers of children that will be traumatically impacted by this disaster. In addition, we know that 300,000 to 400,000 of those children will remain homeless, and there are still lost children in Houston at the George R. Brown Convention Center and the Astrodome.

This week I will be convening advocates for children from around the Nation to sit down and craft a strategy that can address these large numbers of children, not only today in their lives but long-term. These victims will be with us for a long time. We are grateful for the generosity of Americans; but even in their hope and their optimism, we must confront the long-term solutions to bring about a better quality of life and for them, the joy of life.

Let us focus on the children. I welcome the thoughts of Americans and those who advocate for children to craft an agenda, a long-term strategy to help the children of the terrible Hurricane Katrina and terrible tragedy that has occurred for them and their families.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMANN of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

MASTER SERGEANT ROY BENAVIDES, TEXAS WARRIOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Master Sergeant Roy Benavides was born in south Texas on a ranch on August 5, 1935. He was a sharecropper's son, and he barely knew his parents. He was orphaned when he was young, and he and his brother went to live with an uncle in El Campo, Texas.

Roy was a quiet kid and spent most of his time in the sugar cane and cotton fields of south Texas working. He only finished the eighth grade, and his classmates made fun of him because of the way he talked. He joined the Army at the age of 19 and became an Army of One. On his first combat tour in Vietnam, he stepped on a land mine. Doctors were not sure he would be able to keep his leg, but he recovered and went on to become one of those legendary Green Berets.

During his second tour in Vietnam, in the early morning hours of May 2, 1968, Roy Benavides was monitoring a radio, listening to a 12-man unit on patrol. Three Green Berets and nine Montagnard tribesmen were dropped off into the dark, dense jungle west of Lok Nanh, Vietnam. The jungle they were dropped in was infested with the substantial force of the well-trained North Vietnamese Army. As quickly as they disembarked the Army helicopter, the American unit was surrounded by a large force of Vietnamese regulars. It was immediately clear to them that the mission had been given incorrect intelligence on the strength of the enemy. Three helicopters were ordered to evacuate the overrun and overwhelmed American troops. Due to intense enemy fire, the choppers could not rescue those Americans.

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All the while, Sergeant Benavides was monitoring the operation by radio. When Roy heard one of his soldiers scream, "Get us out of here," he jumped onto another helicopter and volunteered for a second evacuation attempt. When he arrived under fire at the shocking scene, four Americans were already dead; eight others were wounded and unable to move.

Carrying a knife and a medic bag, Benavides left from the helicopter that was hovering 10 feet above the ground. He ran 70 yards under small arms fire to his injured and crippled troopers. Before he could get to them, he was shot in the leg, the face and the head, but he took charge and kept moving.

He tended to the injured. He threw out smoke canisters to facilitate the landing of helicopters and dragged the injured and dead aboard. Dodging bullets from the enemy, he ran in to find the dead team leader to recover his body and the classified documents he had on him.

It was in this attempt where he was severely wounded again. He succeeded in getting the classified documents, but he was shot in the stomach and grenade fragments blasted into his

back. At the same time, the hovering helicopter pilot was fatally wounded, and the helicopter crashed.

Even wounded, Sergeant Benavides helped the other wounded escape from the burning wreckage. He called in air strikes with the hope of suppressing the enemy and allowing for a third evacuation.

In critical condition, he supplied water and ammunition to his wounded troopers. His unconquerable spirit kept him going, and he inspired the wounded to stay strong and fight. And they did, for 6 more hours against vicious enemy fire.

When another helicopter eventually landed, he assisted in loading the wounded. On the second trip to this copter, he was bayoneted and received additional wounds in his head and arms. He was out of ammo. Master Sergeant Benavides had to fight assailants with his bare hands.

He finished the job of loading his buddies and killed two more enemy soldiers who were attempting to rush the aircraft. After grabbing the last remaining classified documents, Master Sergeant Benavides allowed himself on the helicopter where he collapsed, and those abroad presumed him to be dead.

He risked his life for hours, and because of his courage and refusal to be stopped, he succeeded in saving the lives of eight of his troopers.

Keeping with the American military tradition, he left no one behind on the battlefield. On the return flight back to the base, Benavides' body was lifeless. He was unable to speak; and when unloaded from the helicopter, Army doctors presumed him to be dead.

As they placed him into a body bag, Benavides did the only thing he could to prove he was not dead, he spit blood in the face of the doctor. He was then rushed to surgery and began to recover from seven gunshot wounds, 28 shrapnel wounds and bayonet wounds.

Master Sergeant Roy Benavides was a true hero and a proud American. His fearless leadership, courage and devotion to duty and America earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor. He acted above and beyond the call of duty.

His courage has been described as superhuman. When speaking about Master Sergeant Benavides, Ronald Reagan once said, "If his heroism were a movie script, you just would not believe it".

But he did not regard himself as someone special. He once said, the real heroes are the ones that gave their lives for America. I do not like being called a hero. I did just what I was trained to do.

He remained in the Army until 1976, and he spent the rest of his life counseling troubled Hispanic children and speaking to schools and youth groups. He is an example to all.

In 1998, on his deathbed, he proclaimed, "I am proud to be an American." And he still had two pieces of shrapnel in his heart.

So as we acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, the beginning of Hispanic Heritage